

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 AID-05 DHA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01

OMB-01 /096 W

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R 140303Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9719

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 7336

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: GOP PRESSURE ON U.S. COMPANIES OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE

REF: (A) MANILA 7260; (B) MANILA 7324

1. COMATT CALLED MAY 14 ON PAUL PERRINE, PRESIDENT OF PHILIPPINE PACKING CORPORATION (DEL MONTE), TO ELICIT FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING REFTEL REPORTS OF GOP DESIRE FOR ASSISTANCE OF U.S. COMPANIES BASED IN THE PHILIPPINES TO CORRECT ITS HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE IN THE UNITED STATES. PERRINE STATED THAT A MEMBER OF HIS EXECUTIVE BOARD, VINCENTE LIM (SON OF THE GENERAL), WAS ON A TRIP TO LEYTE WITH MRS. MARCOS DURING WHICH SHE UNBURDENED HERSELF IN A TWO AND HALF HOUR SESSION ABOUT THE BAD PHILIPPINE IMAGE IN THE UNITED STATES, PARTICULARLY ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS. SHE POINTEDLY ASKED WHETHER U.S. COMPANIES HERE COULD HELP THE GOP. SHE MENTIONED THAT THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR ALONG TIME, KNEW THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE, AND "WE ARE NOT THAT BAD." IT WAS CLEAR TO BOTH PARTIES THAT MRS. MARCOS WANTED LIM TO CARRY THE MESSAGE BACK TO PERRINE WHO, IN TURN, WAS TO ENLIST THE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

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2. THAT WAS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY, PERRINE SAID, SHORTLY BEFORE HE LEFT FOR THE UNITED STATES FOR A MONTH. IT WAS NOT UNTIL TWO WEEKS AGO THAT HE WAS ABLE TO HAVE HIS COLLEAGUES OVER FOR DINNER TO DISCUSS THE GOP REQUEST. PRESENT WERE WILLIAM MITCHELL OF GOODRICH (MANILA 7260), GEORGE SUTER OF PFIZER (MANILA 7324), FRED KRUSE OF PROCTOR AND GAMBLE,

BILL DUNNING OF CALTEX, AND ONE OTHER EXECUTIVE. THE RESPONSE WAS LUEKWARM, AND THE ATTIDUTY WAS, "WHAT CAN WE DO?"

3. ASKED WHETHER THE GOP REQUEST CONTAINED A THREAT, PERRINE SAID HE PERCEIVED NO THREAT, ALTHOUGH HE COULD APPRECIATE THAT SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES MAY HAVE THOUGHT THERE WAS ONE. AS THE HEAD OF A COMPANY WHICH HAS EXTENSIVE INVESTMENTS AND HAS DONE WELL HERE, HE COULD NOT BE BUT CONCERNED ABOUT EHGOP IMAGE, BUT FRANKLY HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO. AS A MATTER OF FACT, HE SAID, NO AMOUNT OF PRESS RELEASES WOULD IMPROVE THE IMAGE IF THE GOP DID NOT TAKE CORRECTIVE OR CONCRETE ACTION. HE POINTED OUT THAT MUCH OF THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT OR DISSIDENT FEELING IN THE PROVINCES STEM FROM PC BRUTALITY AND MALTREATMENT OF PEOPLE. HE PLANS MEET AGAIN WITH HIS COLLEAGUES LATE NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS MEASURES WHICH THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY COULD UNDERTAKE. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO CONVEY TO THE GOP THE IDEA THAT THE BUSINESSMEN WERE ALSO CONCERNED AND TAKING SOME KIND OF ACTION, EVEN "IF COSMETIC."

4. COMMENT: PERRINE HAS LIVED IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR 32 YEARS AND IS A SYMPATHETIC AND UNDERSTANDING OBSERVER OF THE PHILIPPINE SCENE. HIS CORPORATE POLICY IS LOW PROFILE. WE HAVE FOUND HIS VIEWS BALANCED AND WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, BUSINESS FIRMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MANILA07336
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770171-0031
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770558/aaaabxyf.tel
Line Count: 89
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a247d593-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MANILA 7260, 77 MANILA 7324
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2523452
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOP PRESSURE ON U.S. COMPANIES OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE
TAGS: EINV, SHUM, RP, US, (PERRINE, PAUL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a247d593-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009